



WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT?

In the 50s and 60s, simpler times meant shopping and socializing was conducted locally in neighborhood shopping districts (NSD). With the introduction of malls and growing reliance on cars, NSDs gradually fell into despair and neglect as families gravitated to the suburbs. NSDs were tougher to maintain since the businesses are owned by various property owners and sidewalks are *public* rights of way, dependent upon government intervention. With vacancies on the rise, NSDs were unkempt and dependable tenants were drawn to the reliability of malls with common areas of maintenance.

In recent years, people have begun to feel nostalgic for traditional districts that provide a unique authenticity. One-of-a-kind shops, walk ability, and sense of community, something completely amiss in “Generica,” have become powerful draws for communities across the country. Enter the Main Street™ approach, in the late 70’s: a proven community driven and comprehensive approach to managing “downtowns” which provides an organizational structure not unlike that provided to malls. As a result, NSDs are making a wild comeback. Have you noticed “new urbanism” projects such as Bay Street in Emeryville, San Jose’s Santa Ana Row or Pleasant Hill’s faux downtown? They are all reproductions and strive to be “Main Streets.”

So how do you fund management for NSDs when you have multiple property owners with varying interests and concerns? Enter Business Improvement Districts, (BIDs)¹ *self-imposed* and *self-governed* property owner assessments to provide above and beyond what the municipality provides.

In 2004, Temescal and upper Telegraph property owners, including Children’s Hospital, voted overwhelmingly to assess themselves annual fees that go towards managing, maintaining, and marketing Telegraph Avenue starting from 40th to 66th Street, including small portions of Shattuck Ave, 51st, and Claremont.²

¹ **Please note:** BIDs are evolving into the more aptly named Community Benefit Districts (CBD) in recognition that residents live in the midst of the NSD and derive equal benefit from its vitality.

² Temescal’s BID follows the holistic Main Street™ approach, and thereby is comprised of the following committees which meet monthly: **D**esign = Physical improvements and Beautification; **O**rganization = Management; **P**romotion =

Let's nurture our local NSDs and help them thrive! Think of our Main Streets, such as Temescal, as the ultimate recycling programs. We've got the real thing! Yup, that's our Temescal. And she is worth revitalizing, don't you agree? Don't forget when you shop local, you re-circulate your dollars locally too! It's a win win!

Special and Retail Events; Economic Development = Business Retention and Proactive Recruitment Strategies; and Security*= Keeping the district safe(*in urban districts security is addressed as a separate point).